

## Claims

- [c1] 1. A method of predicting a business potential for a first customer comprising: accessing data regarding the first customer of a vendor; and assigning a value for the business potential for the first customer, wherein the value is a function of at least a behavior for a group of other individuals in a population and is based at least in part on the data.
- [c2] 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - determining an individualized result and a group-wide result, wherein: the individualized result includes a maximum amount spent by the first customer during a first transaction or over a first time period, wherein the maximum amount spent by the first customer is obtained from the data; and the group-wide result includes a function of maximum amounts spent by other customers within a group of customers during a second transaction or over second time period; and
  - comparing the individualized result with the group-wide result.
- [c3] 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - determining an individualized result and a group-wide result, wherein:
    - the individualized result includes an individual preference score based on items purchased by the first customer, wherein the individual preference score is obtained from the data; and
    - the group-wide result includes a group-wide preference score based on items purchased by other customers within a group of customers; and
  - comparing the individualized result with the group-wide result.
- [c4] 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising using the data to determine an approximate distance between the first customer and a location of a vendor, wherein the distance is used in determining the value.
- [c5] 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising using the data to determine a geographic indicator, wherein the geographic indicator is used in determining the value.

- [c6] 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
  - collecting the data, wherein the data includes transactional data internal to the vendor; and
  - storing the data,wherein the acts of collecting, storing, accessing, and assigning are performed by the vendor.
- [c7] 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the method takes a computational time that is substantially directly proportional to  $N$  or  $N \log(N)$ , wherein  $N$  is a product of a number of customers and a number of items carried by the vendor or a site of the vendor.
- [c8] 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the value is determined by at least two of an item preference model, a maximum spending model, and a geographic model.
- [c9] 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least a behavior includes an average spending amount for a group of customers within the population.
- [c10] 10. A data processing system readable medium having code embodied therein, the code including instructions executable by a data processing system, wherein the instructions are configured to cause the data processing system to:
  - accessing data regarding the first customer of a vendor; and
  - assigning a value for the business potential for the first customer, wherein the value is a function of at least a behavior for a group of other individuals in a population and is based at least in part on the data.
- [c11] 11. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the method further comprises:
  - determining an individualized result and a group-wide result, wherein:
    - the individualized result includes a maximum amount spent by the first customer during a first transaction or a first time period, wherein the maximum amount spent by the first customer is obtained from the data; and
    - the group-wide result includes a function of maximum amounts spent by other customers within a group of customers during a second transaction or second

time period; and  
comparing the individualized result with the group-wide result.

[c12] 12. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the method further comprises:  
determining an individualized result and a group-wide result, wherein:  
the individualized result includes an individual preference score based on items purchased by the first customer, wherein the individual preference score is obtained from the data; and  
the group-wide result includes group-wide preference score based on items purchased by other customers within a group of customers; and  
comparing the individualized result with the group-wide result.

[c13] 13. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the method further comprises using the data to determine an approximate distance between the first customer and a location of a vendor, wherein the distance is used in determining the value.

[c14] 14. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the method further comprises using the data to determine a geographic indicator, wherein the geographic indicator is used in determining the value.

[c15] 15. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the method further comprises:  
collecting the data, wherein the data includes transactional data internal to the vendor; and  
storing the data,  
wherein the acts of collecting, storing, accessing, and assigning are performed by the vendor.

[c16] 16. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the method takes a computational time that is substantially directly proportional to  $N$  or  $N^*\log(N)$ , wherein  $N$  is a product of a number of customers and a number of items carried by the vendor or a site of the vendor.

[c17] 17. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the value is determined by at least two of an item preference model, a maximum spending model, and a geographic model.

[c18] 18. The data processing system readable medium of claim 10, wherein the at least a behavior includes an average spending amount for a group of customers within the population.